



# YOUTH SOCCER MANUAL

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**Rogers  
Activity  
Center**  
A Partnership with the City of Rogers



# YOUTH SOCCER MANUAL

The Rogers Community-School Recreation Association (RCSRA) Board of Directors is charged with establishing policies and guidelines that govern our youth recreational sports programs. This group of individuals takes this responsibility very seriously, keeping in mind that the ultimate goal is for every child to have the opportunity to participate, regardless of athletic ability or financial status.

The Rogers Recreation Department staff implements the policies and guidelines established by RCSRA. The individual League Directors constantly strive to make each experience a positive influence in the participant's life.

## TEAM FORMATION

Registration is held at the Rogers Activity Center.

**U6-U11 Teams are formed according to school zones, when possible.** Late registrants, however, cannot be guaranteed placement on their school team. Late registrants are placed on teams with the least number of players.

**Middle School boys and girls teams are formed at each Middle School.** Ideally, two teams will be formed at each school – a Varsity and a JV team. The JV teams will be developmental teams. The Varsity level will be comprised of players possessing a higher level of skill. Varsity teams will be locked after the team's second game. Rosters are to be submitted the business day after the team has played its second league game.

## PRESEASON AND PRACTICE PROCEDURES

1. **The Rogers Activity Center, as well as the Arkansas State Soccer Association,** requires all coaches to complete a voluntary disclosure form once a year, regardless of prior coaching history. This form must be completed before the first practice. Paper forms are available at the Activity Center, but **ALL** questions on the form must be completed.
2. The coach will contact the parents of the players on the team as soon as possible after the coaches meeting to notify them the time and location of the first practice.
3. The coach will choose the time and location of the practices. Practice times will be scheduled at the coaches meeting. A scrimmage or team assembly is considered to be a "practice".
4. Each coach should hold a parent/child meeting prior to or at the beginning of the first practice. At this time, the coach can communicate what they expect of the players and parents, as well as what the players and parents can expect of the coach. At this time, the coach can hand out a team phone tree, roster, and any additional team information.
5. Each coach should encourage the players to bring a soccer ball to each practice. However, we ask that coaches understand that not all players will be able to do so.
6. **PLAYERS NOT REGISTERED with the Rogers Activity Center** are absolutely **NOT** allowed to participate in any practices or games. Coaches who allow this could be held responsible for any injury as these kids are NOT covered by our insurance.

### Maximum Practice Time Regulations:

U6	Once a week for 45 minutes
U7	Twice a week for 55 minutes
U9-U11	Twice a week for 60 minutes
Middle School	Twice a week for 90 minutes or Three times a week for 60 minutes

## LEAGUE GAMES

1. League games are played at City parks in Rogers. The earliest game will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Saturdays and 5:30 p.m. on weekdays.
2. Middle School JV teams will play against other Rogers JV teams. Players are not allowed to play for more than one JV team per day. Varsity teams will play against other teams in NWA.
3. U6/U7 players will play 2 quarters start to finish. For U9-JV level teams: each player is entitled to play one half of each game. Varsity players are guaranteed 9 minutes of each game.
4. Regular attendance at practice is essential to the development of both the player and the team. If your child can not attend practice on a regular basis, we recommend that you reconsider your child's continued participation in the program. If a player is chronically absent, the coach may, after obtaining approval from the league director, reduce the playing time of the child.
5. Any child who did not start the first period of the game must go into the game for the second period. Coaches are asked to equalize the opportunity for all players to be "starters" throughout the season. (Exception Middle School)
6. One of the goals of this program is for players to develop the skills and appreciation for each position on the soccer team. Coaches should strive to rotate players into different positions (defender, midfield, or forward). All players should be encouraged to play the goal keeper position. (Exception Middle School)
7. **During games, all coaches and players must occupy one side of the playing field; each team must remain on its own side of the center line. All parents and spectators must occupy the opposite side of the field.**
8. The Rogers Community-School Recreation Association does not keep standings or records of the league games in the U6 and U7 leagues. Standings **will** be kept for all other age groups.
9. Game cancellations will be announced by 4:00 p.m. on weekdays and by 8:00 a.m. on Saturdays. This information can be accessed at [www.rogersarkansas.com/recreation](http://www.rogersarkansas.com/recreation) on Facebook or by calling 479-631-0336 and choosing option #1. It is the responsibility of the coaches, parents, and players to obtain this information. In addition, a game- time decision may be made by the referee at the field to protect the safety of the players.
10. Referee decisions are final. Sportsmanship is required of all those connected with the Rogers Community-School Recreation Association Soccer League. **As a coach, your positive attitude and sportsmanship will serve as an example for your players, other coaches, referees, and spectators.** Each coach is responsible for their own conduct and that of the players, both on the field and off the field. In the event of continued misconduct or unsportsmanlike activity, the referee may terminate the game. Players, fans, or coaches may be suspended from attending or participating in league games.

## **Purpose of RAC Youth Sports Coach**

To coach the specific sport with an expectation that is competitive yet age-appropriate, while emphasizing character development, fundamentals of the sport, fair play and sportsmanship. As a coach, it is important to let players know that you believe in them, whether they are the star of the team or the least talented player. Remember, **coaching is not about winning or losing... it is about providing an opportunity for each child to experience the game.**

## **Qualifications**

1. Thorough knowledge and understanding of the rules of the game.
2. Ability to communicate effectively with children and adults/parents.
3. Enthusiasm, patience, drive and encouragement.

## **Background Check Policy and Procedures**

1. **Purpose:** Background checks will be conducted for all volunteers and staff wanting to work with children through the RAC. This is done to ensure that the children involved in a youth sports organization receive the highest quality experience. As part of that process, the RAC must exclude individuals that have certain criminal histories.
2. **Guidelines:** The RAC shall ensure that all participants 18 years of age or younger shall have at least one approved coach or assistant coach present at each athletic activity, including practices, games, meetings or gatherings. All teams will have one coach and one or more assistant coaches processed for approval. Each coach will have a background check every 12 months, for as long as that coach continues coaching in this league.
3. **Process:** A local background check form is attached to your volunteer application. These background checks are required to be completed before the start of practices for each sport. Should any information be found that will prevent an applicant from being accepted, a Director will notify that applicant in a confidential manner. In the event the applicant feels a mistake has been reported in the criminal background check, it is the applicant's responsibility to contact the reporting agency and resolve any issues. The list of crimes that are considered "disqualifying" includes, but is not limited to, the crimes listed on the local background check form attached to your volunteer application.

## **Coaching Procedures**

1. Prior to attending any practices or games, each coach and assistant coach must complete a volunteer application, attend a pre-season coaches meeting, and have an online background check completed. Forms can be found on the website or at the RAC. This process needs to be done once a year and will cover multiple sports.
2. Coaches will contact the parents of the players on their teams as soon as possible after the coaches meetings to notify them of the first practice and parent meeting. It is important that parents are given all necessary paperwork, including the parent packet, a practice schedule, and they should have the opportunity to ask questions. Please be prepared to fill them in on practice agendas and expectations of the players and parents. And, let them know what they can expect from you. You can also take this time to find a "team parent" for organizing emails and events associated with the team.

3. Equipment: Each coach is provided with a ball bag, soccer balls, whistle, practice vest, and practice cones. Coaches should remind players that it is unsafe to climb on the soccer goals.
4. Coaches should arrive 20 minutes early to practice in order to be ready to begin at the scheduled practice time. Coaches are required to be at all practices and games of the teams they are coaching.
5. **Coaches should have a schedule and all necessary materials for each practice, to ensure practices run smoothly and constructively.** Up to three practices per week are allowed as long as scheduling allows.
6. Coaches are expected to coach games, as well as teach participants the fundamental skills needed to be successful. They need to invest as much into the success of the individual players as they do in the win/loss records.
7. Coaches should help players develop character, build leadership skills, and strive to make all criticism constructive and appropriate to age of participant.
8. Respecting Authority: Players must understand the importance of respecting authority. This goes beyond just listening to their coaches and following instructions. It means showing respect to all adults involved in the program, respect towards opponents, and, most importantly, displaying that respect towards officials at all times, even when calls do not go their way. Demanding their best: It does not take any special athletic talent to give maximum effort; and it does not require any special skills either. All it takes is a commitment to give 100% at all times, regardless of the score in the game. Be sure to stress how valuable a trait it is to be known as hard workers who give it their all each time they take the court – it is a trait that will impact everything they do in life, from studying and taking tests in school, to their job performance when they enter the working world. Igniting the passion to work hard in all they do will benefit them for the rest of their lives. **See section on Coaching Expectations in this manual.**
9. Coaches should be a positive role model at all times. Coaches should handle frustration with referees, players, or parents respectfully. **Coaches, if you have concerns or questions regarding a particular league game or referee, please wait until the next business day to contact the League Director.** See coaches code of conduct.
10. Coaches are urged to attend our coaching clinic prior to each soccer season, unless they have a USSF coaching license. JV coaches must possess at least an “F” coaching license for soccer, within the last 5 years. Varsity coaches must have an “E” coaching license.

### **Modeling Good Sportsmanship as a Coach: By The National Alliance For Youth Sports and Greg Bach**

- As a youth coach, teaching kids the importance of good sportsmanship can be challenging. What makes teaching (and modeling) good sportsmanship particularly tricky is that youngsters are bombarded with images of older soccer players’ trash talking, showboating, and disrespecting opponents and officials. However, keep in mind that you are fighting the good fight: Good sportsmanship is one of the healthiest ideals you can instill in your players.
- Incorporate the following suggestions into your coaching philosophy. They can help make your team one of the most liked and respected teams in the league (and your players the envy of all parents in the stands):
  - i. Talk about sportsmanship outside your team. While your players are going through warm-ups, you can discuss a game they watched on television and ask whether they saw any displays of good sportsmanship. Praising these displays and subtly reinforcing their importance goes a long way toward instilling the right qualities in your players.

- ii. Set a positive tone on game day by shaking hands with the opposing coach. The players, fans, and opposing coaches will notice your gesture of sportsmanship. Plus, it will remind everyone that soccer is just a game and you are all there for the kids.
- iii. Always be a model of good sportsmanship. Do not yell at officials or question their judgment. If you are not a model of good sportsmanship, you can not expect your players (or their parents) to be good sports. Your players will take their cue from you, so if you rant and rave about a call, expect your players to show disrespect toward the officials as well.
- iv. Shake hands after the game. Regardless of the outcome, have your players line up and shake hands with the opposing team and its coaches. If your team won, your players should tell their opponents that they played a good game, and if your squad lost, your players should congratulate the opponents on their victory. Another classy move is for your players to shake the officials' hands following the contest.
- v. Recognize good sports during your post-game talk. Perhaps one of your players went out of his way after the game to congratulate an opponent who played a strong game. Recognizing such displays reinforces to your players that how they behave during and after games really does matter to you and to all the spectators.

## **Coaches Code of Conduct**

All coaches, players, spectators, and league staff shall be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Also, all facilities that the program uses needs to be treated with respect and left the **same as they were found**. Siblings and friends of players must carefully be watched by their parents or guardians.

1. All coaches shall promote and maintain good sportsmanship at all times, including at all practices, games and team functions. This is most important in your interactions with referees and parents. All interactions must be done with respect of the individual and the game in mind. Your role as a role model is most valued and observed at these times. **Coaches, if you have concerns or questions regarding a particular league game or referee, please wait until the next business day to contact the League Director. Also, coaches will not communicate with other teams' players, fans or coaches in a negative way.**
2. Coaches shall place the emotional and physical well-being of the players ahead of the desire to win.
3. Coaches will review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of the players. See injury prevention section of manual on page 7.
4. Coaches shall comply with the league code of conduct and any additional league rules set down by the league staff.
5. To protect all RAC staff, volunteers, and program members, at no time during a RAC program may a coach be alone with a single child where the coach cannot be observed by others. The "2 adult" rule will be followed at all times. A child must never be left alone with a volunteer unless it is the child's parent.
6. Coaches will never leave a child unsupervised.
7. Abuse of a child will not be tolerated, and may be cause for immediate dismissal. Coaches will not abuse children in any way, including:
  - a. Physical Abuse – striking, shaking, grabbing players by their facemasks, use of excessive punishments or excessive physical training techniques, not allowing children to use the bathroom
  - b. Verbal Abuse – humiliating, degrading, threatening, cursing
  - c. Sexual Abuse – touching or speaking inappropriately
  - d. Mental Abuse – Shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel
  - e. Neglect – withholding basic care, depriving children of water

8. Coaches will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally, regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, economic level of the family, or fundamental ability.
9. Coaches must be prepared and keep an eye out for possible signs of abuse displayed by a child. Such as:
  - a. Physical abuse: Has unexplained burns, bites, broken bones, a black eye, bruises or faded bruises.
  - b. Emotional abuse: Displays extreme behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding; extreme passivity or aggression.
  - c. Neglect: Is frequently absent; consistently dirty; severe body odor; lacks sufficient clothing; abuses alcohol or other drugs.
  - d. Sexual abuse: Has difficulty walking or sitting; sudden change in appetite; or demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior.

*Keep in mind that these indicators don't automatically prove that abuse has taken place, but by being aware of these indicators you can consider them potential warning flags and observe the child more closely to determine whether the situation warrants contacting the appropriate authorities. Please call the Child Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-482-5964 if you suspect any form of abuse. You are now a responsible adult in the lives of these children and any one of them experiencing abuse depends on us to help them if needed.*

10. Any DUI, DWI, or arrest associated with alcohol or illegal drugs will lead to immediate termination.
11. Coaches must dress in a way that is respectable to the game and to the city of Rogers. Each coach is representing the RAC, the School and the City as a representative at all engagements.
12. Any team events or "get-togethers" away from practice/game sites must be reported to the RAC.
13. Any merchandise for RAC teams must be approved by the RAC.
14. All practices, scrimmages and games must be scheduled or approved by the RAC.

## **Disciplinary Guidelines**

Enforcement of the league playing rules shall be the sole responsibility of the officiating staff assigned to the game. Enforcement of additional code of conduct rules shall be the joint responsibility of the League Director, officiating staff assigned to that game, any league staff present at the game, and the RAC administrative staff.

Violations of conduct rules for coaches, fans and players include (but are not limited to) the following:

- \*Fighting
  - \*Foul Language
  - \*Derogatory remarks made to officials, coaches or League officials
  - \*Cheating or fraud of any kind
  - \*Destruction of league or city property
  - \*Continued use of improper equipment or wearing of an improper uniform
1. First offense – The Soccer League Director will contact coach and discuss.
  2. Second offense – The Soccer League Director will contact the coach, and a meeting will be held with Recreation Department Director. Results from review can range from another official warning, to suspension of the coach, to removal of the coach, depending upon the situation.
  3. If a coach or fan is ejected from a game, that ejected person must leave the field. In addition to ejection from the game, the individual may receive an additional suspension and/or penalty assigned by the league director.

The RAC understands that there are many disagreements with coaches that do not warrant any action (parent thinks their kid needs to be playing another position or does not like the practice time.) This Code is about the Coach's actions and behavior. This Code is subjective in nature and actions will be reviewed by the League Director.

## **Dealing with Parents**

Communication is essential to successfully controlling any situation that may develop during the season. At the initial parent meeting where the coach lays out the practice plan for the season, the coach should distribute parent manuals, including the Parent Code of Conduct (please review for your own knowledge). It is a good idea to keep parents updated each week on the plans for that week. It is also a good idea to set guidelines on when and how the parents should communicate with the coach, especially if the parents are concerned or upset about something. **A general rule is to allow 24 hours to pass from the time of the incident before making contact with the coach, so the parents have time to cool down, if they are upset. Plus it gives you, the coach, some time to process situations that may arise at practices or games. It is never a good situation to have a parent, who may be upset, talking to a coach right after a game or practice, with the kids and other adults around.** Plus, as a coach, it is difficult sometimes to have a clear head and controlled emotions, right after a game or practice when adrenaline is still high.

Also, there are several functions throughout the season that require coordination. These events will be much easier for the coach to manage if the coach has an efficient team parent who can organize the players and parents. Team parents can help bring snacks and drinks for games and practices, organize team meetings, keep accurate records in the team scorebook, be an extra hand at practice, and, in general, assist the coach in the smooth operation of the team.

## **Injury Prevention** “Stop sports injuries – Keeping Kids in the Game For Life” [www.STOPSSportsinjuries.org](http://www.STOPSSportsinjuries.org)

While the human body is tremendously resilient, pushing a body – especially one that is young and not fully developed – beyond what it can handle can have significant short- and long-term consequences. For all sports, focus on improving core stability and balance first. A sound core and optimal balance is crucial to controlling and stabilizing the limbs. Next, focus on improving overall cardiovascular fitness and endurance, focusing on long duration and low intensity workouts. Even if the sport is primarily anaerobic, an athlete with a strong cardiovascular status will advance faster when training for aerobic/high-explosion activities. **The most important role in preventing injury is proper warm up and cool down activities. Please incorporate your own exercises or see list below.**

**Warming up for play:** The years of watching players lying down and counting off their static stretches before practice are over. More and more teams around the country are correctly introducing dynamic warm-ups to their pre-practice and pre-game routines. Dynamic stretches facilitate movements similar to those during play and target muscle groups as they relate to specific sport movements. In addition to raising muscular tissue temperature in the body and increasing blood flow, dynamic stretching activates the nervous system, preparing the body for movements performed during play. Plyometrics is a system of exercise in which the muscles are rapidly and repeatedly stretched and contracted for optimal function.

Common dynamic and plyometric exercises include the following:

- Warm-up: ½ speed jog, ¾ speed jog, and backwards jog
- Mild jog with high knees, skipping, butt kicks, and reaching to toes
- Lunges with twist and walking quad stretch
- Crawling calf stretch
- Warm-up: passing the ball, keep-away, and 5v2 to develop touch, mobility and ball control.



**Cooling Down:** Coaches and athletes often sacrifice cooling down properly after practices and games. Taking an extra 15 minutes after play to do a light jog, and static stretching will speed the recovery process, lengthen muscles, and improve muscular range of motion. Static stretches are things like, touching your toes, stretching your arms, sitting on the ground and stretching hips, thighs and calves. Holding the stretches for counts of 10-15.

Athletes also should continue to drink plenty of fluids after play. Drinking water or other sports drinks 20 minutes after physical activity will help the body recover and recharge, as well as avoid potential heat illness. Coaches should emphasize the importance of warming up and cooling down properly. Warming up effectively will not only prevent injury, but also dramatically improve performance during play, while static stretching after play has been proven to be highly beneficial in helping muscle recovery. By following these practices, coaches will greatly reduce injury, increase performance, and keep our children in the game for life.

### **Spotting an Overuse Injury and Recovering From It**

Use the following system as a general guideline for classifying, grading the development, and assessing the progress of an overuse injury.

- Stage 1: Pain after activity, no functional impairment
- Stage 2: Pain during and after activity with minimal functional impairment
- Stage 3: Pain during and after activity that persists throughout the day, significant functional impairment
- Stage 4: Significant functional impairment with all daily activities

It cannot be stressed enough how important it is to teach players that playing through any amount of pain will only cause further injury and likely longer periods of time away from their sport. Taking the necessary precautions will not only keep athletes healthy, but also increase their performance and enjoyment for years to come. To initially reverse and prevent, overuse injury progression, follow the R-I-C-E method (rest, ice, compression and elevation). This will help muscles, ligaments, and tendons recover after play.

### **Basic First Aide Principles**

The key aims of first aid can be summarized in three key points:

- **Preserve life:** the overriding aim of all medical care, including first aid, is to save lives.
- **Prevent further harm:** also sometimes called **prevent the condition from worsening, or danger of further injury**, this covers both external factors, such as moving a patient away from any cause of harm, and applying first aid techniques to prevent worsening of the condition, such as applying pressure to stop a bleed becoming dangerous.
- **Promote recovery:** first aid also involves trying to start the recovery process from the illness or injury, and in some cases might involve completing a treatment, such as in the case of cleaning a small wound.

**1. Take care of the open wounds:** Cover any open wound with a clean cloth or bandage and make sure that it does not get contaminated. You should protect yourself during the process to minimize any chance of cross-infection.

**2. Watch out for any surrounding hazard:** In any situation which involves gas leaks or fires, your safety must be a priority. Always ensure that there is no threat to you or the victim's life.

**3. A seriously injured person should never be moved from his position, unless absolutely necessary:** This will prevent any internal injuries from further aggravation.

**4. Never give the victim any sort of medication yourself:** This is the duty of a trained medical personnel only. Any wrong drug or an inappropriate dose can be fatal for the injured person.

**5. Ensure that the victim is stable:** Try to stop any excessive bleeding with help of a tourniquet. Check for the vital stats like pulse and heartbeat. Read more: <http://healthmad.com/health/first-aid-guide-basic-principles/#ixzz22L5kcTWC>

## **Nutrition and Hydration from National Alliance on Youth Sports**

It is very important that the athletes maintain proper hydration and practice good nutritional habits at all times, but especially during their sports season.

1. **Carbohydrates: Fuel for young athletes.** You can teach children the proper way to head a soccer ball, shoot a basketball or catch a football, but if they aren't eating the right foods before arriving for practices or games their performance is going to be compromised. All young athletes, regardless of the sports they are participating in, need carbohydrates to fuel their bodies as well as increase their chances of performing at optimal levels. Carbohydrates represent the main source of energy in a diet. The more carbohydrate fuel children lose during competition, the less energy they have to perform at their peak.
2. **Protein: The building block of muscle.** Protein is an important piece of the nutrition puzzle for young athletes, as it helps repair muscles after exercise as well as promotes the growth of valuable muscle tissue. Good sources of protein include chicken, fish, pork, beef, eggs, peanut butter, soy milk, beans and lentils, among others. Every young athlete's daily diet must include adequate amounts of protein to enhance their ability to perform all season long. How much protein should children be consuming? Are protein supplements a good alternative: Which foods are better than others for providing the most protein punch? See the "Nutrition: Protein" flyer at the end of the Packet.
3. **Making good decisions to enhance muscle recovery.** What coaches and parents say to children following games impacts that youngster's confidence and self-esteem. Similarly, what young athletes eat following games impacts their bodies and how they feel. Physical activity can cause damage to muscles and create unwanted soreness, but youngsters who replenish their bodies with the right types of food – and in a timely manner – are more likely to feel better faster and be able to return to the next practice or game at full speed. What nutrients are most important for muscle recovery? How do carbs and protein combine to promote muscle recovery? Why is the timing of nutrient intake after exercise so important? See the "Nutrition: Recover" flyer at the end of the packet.
4. **Honing in on Hydration.** The importance of children consuming lots of fluids – and the right kinds- simply can't be stated enough. When children are exerting energy their body temperature rises. Youngsters who don't consume adequate amounts of appropriate fluids during games, especially those contested in hot and humid conditions, are at increased risk of becoming dehydrated and suffering muscle cramps, heat exhaustion or – even worse- heat stroke. Kids should drink 100% fruit juice, water and milk during the day. Water is good enough for practices up to an hour with limited sweat loss and heat is low. When heat and humidity rise and sweat loss is large, sports drinks should be incorporated.

# Soccer Players Code

- **Play the game for the game's sake.**
- **Be generous when you win.**
- **Be graceful when you lose.**
- **Be fair always, no matter what the cost.**
- **Learn and follow the Laws of the Game.**
- **Work for the good of your team.**
- **Accept the decisions of the officials.**
- **Believe in the honesty of your opponents.**
- **Conduct yourself with honor and pride.**

## **Soccer Parent Handbook and Responsibilities**

1. Please introduce yourself to your child's coach. Remind your child to thank the volunteer coach at the end of each season.
2. Players and parents should ensure that the players arrive early with the proper attire for games and practices. Weather can be unpredictable. Be prepared by bringing sunscreen, rain jackets, blankets etc. Players need adequate time to warm up and stretch before practices and games.
3. Please pick up your child promptly after practices and games. Please notify the coach as early as possible **if your child will not be attending a practice or game.**
4. Sportsmanship is important for kids to learn. Set a good example on the sidelines by offering positive encouragement and support and refrain from coaching. Remember to focus on your child's effort, development, and enjoyment, rather than winning or losing.
5. Proper hydration is key to a good game. Be sure to bring plenty of water for kids to drink before, during and after their practices and games in water bottles labeled with their name. Healthy snacks like orange wedges, grapes and sports drinks are also good for replenishing nutrients after strenuous activity. Please remind your child and other team members to deposit in a trash can all trash and plastic drink bottles on and around the bench area after each game.
6. It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the coach of any special needs the child has prior to the first practice. Examples are asthma, hearing loss, physical limitations, severe allergies, behavior disorder, or any other learning disorders.
7. There are several functions throughout the season that require coordination. These functions will be much easier for you to manage if you delegate someone as the team parent who can oversee the snack and drink schedule for after each game. The team parent can also ensure that adequate

communication with the other parents is achieved when league games are cancelled or when league games are added to the league schedule.

8. Use caution when driving in the areas near the soccer fields.
9. **If a problem develops between a player or a parent and the coach, first discuss the problem with the coach. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, contact the League Director.**
10. Coaches **DO NOT** assign players to league teams. Any parent who approaches a coach regarding their child being placed on the team will be referred to the League Director.
11. Please remember the soccer registration takes place well before the start of the season. We have two separate soccer season registrations, Spring and Fall. Please consult the Rogers Activity Center website at [www.rogersarkansas.com/recreation](http://www.rogersarkansas.com/recreation) or call 479-631-0336
12. Secondary accident insurance is provided for all players that are registered through the Rogers Activity Center. All injury claim forms must be submitted as soon as injury is determined.

## US Youth Soccer Guide to the Rules and Players

(usyouthsoccer.org)

*Object of the Game: Goals are at each end of the field. Each team defends their goal, while trying to score on their opponent. Players primarily use their feet to advance the ball towards their opponent's goal. Players will often use their head, chest and thighs to control and advance the ball. The goalkeeper is the only player allowed to use their hands, but only inside their penalty area. A "goal" is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line, inside the goal. A goal is worth one point. Some competitions may have over time periods, or use penalty kicks to determine a winner.*

*Game Time: For U6-U7 age groups, games will range from 8-10 minute quarters. For older age groups, games are divided into halves ranging from 25-35 minutes each half. All games have a five minute half time. Teams switch sides after halftime. The referee keeps the official time and does not stop the clock for out-of-bounds, throw-ins or free kicks. Referees may add extra time if they feel time was lost due to substitutions, injury or players/teams wasting time.*

### *Soccer Talk*

- Advantage: A decision by the referee to disregard a foul by the defensive team if a stoppage in play would benefit the team that committed the violation. This allows the team on offense to maintain its playing advantage.
- Beat: To get the ball around an opponent by dribbling or shooting.
- Breakaway: When an attacker with the ball makes it past the last defender and is on his way toward the goal for a one-on-one showdown with the goalkeeper.
- Clearing: Happens when a team kicks the ball out of its defensive zone, ending an offensive threat by the opposing team.
- Cross: A kick made near the sideline toward the middle of the field to get the ball closer to the front of the goal.
- Corner Arcs: A quarter-circle located at each of the four corners of the field. On a corner kick the ball must be kicked from inside the arc.
- Chip: A short, lofted pass or shot.

- Dribble: The basic skill of advancing the ball with the feet while controlling it.
- Drop Ball: A restart when the ball is dropped between two players and may only be played once it has touched the ground.
- Goal Area: A rectangular area extending from the goal line. Used to designate where goal kicks are taken.
- Hat Trick: Three or more goals scored in a game by a single player.
- Half-volley: A kick of the ball just as it is rebounding off the ground.
- Header: When a player controls or strikes a ball in the air, using their head.
- Juggling: Keeping the ball in the air with any part of the body (no hands or arms). Used for practice and developing coordination.
- Kickoff: Takes place at the center of the field and is used to start play at the beginning of a game, after halftime, or after a goal is scored. A goal can be scored directly from a kickoff.
- Marking: Closely defending a player to prevent him from receiving the ball or advancing the ball by dribbling or passing.
- Penalty Area: Rectangular area extending 18 yards from the goal line(modified for small sided games). Goalkeepers only can use their hands within their penalty area. Any foul against the defending team resulting in a direct kick inside this area, results in a penalty kick for the attacking team.
- Receiving: When a player uses his body to slow down and control a moving ball. Most often this is done using the chest, thigh or foot.
- Slide Tackle: An attempt by a defender to take the ball away from a dribbler by sliding on the ground feet first into the ball.
- Tackle: A move to take the ball away from an opponent's feet.
- Throw-In: The only time a field player may use their hands. Used to bring the ball back in play after it has crossed out of bounds on the sidelines. Two hands must be used and the ball must be thrown from behind the player's head. Both feet must be on the ground and behind the sideline.
- Volley: A kick made while the ball is in the air, before it touches the ground. Can be for a clearance or to shoot on goal.
- Wall: Players stand as a line or wall to protect the goal against a free kick.

## ***The Player***

*There are typically 11 players on the field for each team during a game (younger age groups have fewer players). There are no required formations, but most teams will use three forwards, three midfielders, four backs/defenders and a goalkeeper. Positions are very fluid as any player may score a goal and all players may drop back to defend.*

- Goalkeeper: The goalkeeper is responsible for defending the goal and any shots that come toward it. Only the keeper can put his hands or arms on the ball, the penalty are surrounding the goal.
- Forwards: The forwards (also called attackers or strikers) are the team's primary offense. Their role is to advance the ball and score goals.
- Midfielders: Midfielders play behind the forwards and in front of the defense and their job is to assist both of these groups. Generally, they'll receive the ball from the defenders and advance it to the forwards to score goals.
- Defenders: Also called fullbacks. In soccer, everyone plays offense and defense, depending on when their team possesses the ball. Specialized defensive positions are sweepers and stoppers, depending on the type of formation a team may use.
- Substitutes: Any player who does not start the game, but is eligible to come off the bench. In recreational play it is recommended that all players receive equal playing time. In older age groups and more competitive levels, substitutes may be used less frequently. Typically in youth games, substitutes may only enter the field with the referee's permission during a stoppage of play, and when their team has possession of the ball on throw-ins and goal kicks.

### ***Referee Talk***

- **Charge**: To run into an opponent. This is legal if done from the side of the ball carrier. However, it is illegal against a player without the ball or from behind.
- **Hand Ball**: A foul where a player (other than the goalkeeper in the penalty area) deliberately touches the ball with his hand or arm. The opposing team is awarded a direct free kick.
- **Holding**: When an opponent's movement is obstructed with either hand or arms, a direct kick is awarded.
- **Officials**: The official protects the players and enforces the rules. The referee officiates the game and is on the field with the players. The referee keeps the official time. The assistant referees each patrol one half of the field, from opposite sidelines. Their job is to provide assistance to the referee only. AR's as they are called, use a flag to signal to the referee and to the players when the ball is out of bounds, when a player is potentially offside, or they have seen a foul committed. The referee makes the final determination whether or not to blow the whistle.
- **Tripping**: If a player uses any part of his body to trip an opposing player, a direct kick is awarded.
- **Offside**: (Does not apply to U6-U10 small sided games) Occurs when a player positions himself nearer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last opponent. No fewer than two defenders (usually the goalkeeper and one other defender) must be nearer to the goal line than the attacker. The person advancing with the ball must be the first to cross the line of defense.
- **Red Card**: Serious misconduct, violent play, offensive language or intentionally denying a goal. Immediate ejection from the game. The team may not replace this player and will play shorthanded for the remainder of the game.
- **Yellow Card**: (Caution) Shown to a player by the official for dangerous or unsportsmanlike behavior. If a player is shown two yellow cards in one game, it is an automatic ejection from the game.

### ***Kickoff***

- **Corner Kick**: Awarded to the attacking team if the defense knocks the ball out of bounds over their own endline. The kick is taken from the corner nearest where the ball went out of bounds. A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.
- **Goal Kick**: Awarded to the defense when the attacking team knocks the ball out of bounds over the area, an must clear the penalty area before being touched by another player. Extremely rare and unlikely, but a goal can be scored directly from a goal kick.
- **Free Kick**: Awarded by the referee due to an infraction of the rules. The kick is generally taken from the spot in which the infraction took place. The defending team must be a minimum of 10 yards away from the ball (modified for small-sided games). There two kind of free kicks (direct and indirect), determined by the severity of the infraction.
- **Direct Kick**: Awarded when a serious foul is committed against another player. This is a free kick in which a goal can be scored directly by the kicker. Some fouls resulting in a direct kick are holding, striking, tripping, pushing and hand balls.
- **Indirect Kick**: Awarded when an infraction of the rules has taken place or a less serious foul has been committed. On an indirect kick, a goal cannot be scored unless the ball is touched by a second player. Some minor fouls or infractions resulting in an indirect kick are offsides and dangerous play.
- **Penalty Kick**: A direct kick is awarded to the attacking team when a major foul is committed by a defender inside his own penalty area. The kick is taken from the penalty spot. Only the kicker and the keeper are allowed in the penalty area. The goalkeeper must be on the goal line until the ball is kicked.

### **Program Evaluations**

Program evaluations are extremely important because help us evaluate and plan for the next season. The league director wants to hear from parents what they like about the program and what they would like to see changed. The youth soccer program can only get better if the league director knows what needs to be changed and what needs to remain the way it was for the next season. The form can be found at [www.rogersarkansas.com/recreation](http://www.rogersarkansas.com/recreation) or the Rogers Activity Center front desk.